

CLAIMS

1. Process for compression of digital data of a video sequence, characterized in that it comprises the following steps :

- 5 - segmentation (1) of the sequence into alternating video shots,
- classification (2) of these shots according to camera angles in order to obtain classes,
- construction of a sprite (3) or video object plane for a class that is a composite image corresponding to the background relating to this
- 10 class,
- grouping (5) of at least two sprites onto the same sprite or video object plane, in order to form an image called large sprite,
- extraction (4), for the shots corresponding to the large sprite, of image foreground objects from the sequence relating to these shots,
- 15 - separate encoding of the large sprite and of the extracted foreground objects.

2. Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the sprites are placed one under the other (5) in order to construct the large sprite.

20 3. Process according to Claim 2, characterized in that the positioning of the sprites is calculated as a function of the cost of encoding of the large sprite.

 4. Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the large sprite is a sprite such as is defined and encoded in the MPEG4

25 standard.

 5. Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that a multiplexing operation (8) is carried out for the data relating to the extracted foreground objects and for the data relating to the large sprite in order to deliver a data stream.

30 6. Compressed data stream for the encoding of a sequence of images according to the process of Claim 1, characterized in that it comprises encoding data for the large sprite associated with deformation parameters applicable to the large sprite and encoding data for the extracted foreground objects.

35 7. Encoder for encoding data according to the process of Claim 1, characterized in that it comprises a processing circuit for the classification

of the sequences into shots, the construction of a sprite for each class and the composition of a large sprite by concatenation of these sprites, a circuit for the extraction of image foreground objects from the sequence relating to the large sprite and an encoding circuit for the encoding of the large sprite and the extracted foreground objects.

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8. Decoder for the decoding of video data of a video sequence comprising alternating shots according to the process of Claim 1, characterized in that it comprises a decoding circuit for data relating to a large sprite and for data relating to foreground objects and a circuit for
- 10 constructing images from the decoded data.